



EXHIBIT Z
DATE 1/15/09
HB agency information

Brian Schweitzer
Governor

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Ron de Yong
Director

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Memorandum

To: Representative Mary Caferro, HD 80
Representative Margaret MacDonald, HD 54

From: Ron de Yong, Director *Ron*
Montana Department of Agriculture

Date: January 14, 2009

Re: Per your request, Montana Food System Council information

Please find attached the names and addresses of the volunteer citizens who serve on the Montana Food System Council. I have included an additional attachment that provides a short biography of each member.

The Council has identified three legislative goals for the 2009 session.

- Extend the sunsets on economic development programs in the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce that support economic development benefits to the state;
- Address the need for food system infrastructure and technical assistance in the state with strategically placed Food & Agriculture Development Centers;
- Reduce the number of people who lack access to plentiful and nutritious food across our state.

Please let me know if I can provide any further information.

Thank you for your time.

Montana Food Systems Council

Address List

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Council Coordinator
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Montana Food System Council Coordinator
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Montana Food System Council Bios

Gayle Carlson-Gifford – Executive Director Great Falls Community Food Bank. Past experience includes Executive Director for YWCA/Mercy Home Domestic Violence Shelter, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Alliance for Youth. Her “specialty” is grant writing and research.

Sandy Courtnege – Montana Farmers Union Communications Director. She works with family farmers, ranchers and rural communities to develop statewide, regional and national partnerships for their economic benefit. She serves on the Grow Montana steering committee, a coalition working to create ways for more of Montana’s food and farm products to be used closer to home.

Anita DuPuis - Salish Kootenai College. Anita has established the Community Health and Development Department at Salish Kootenai College, where she is directing efforts in community development and public health with emphasis on whole systems interventions for social change toward developing a healthy tribal community. Anita’s most current work is that of developing health promotion interventions for American Indian communities based in traditional culture and lifestyles.

Erika Fredrickson – Arts Writer Missoula Independent and blogger for a site called Envirovore. She is particularly interested in getting better food processing in Montana and finding innovative ways to help connect Montanans with the great food our state can provide. She brings strong communication skills to the council which will be beneficial in a number of ways.

Pam Gerwe – Owner/operator of small market farm, Purple Frog Gardens. Her goal on the council is to use her voice as a farmer and her networking skills to help facilitate access to Montana food and food production for all Montanans. She assisted to start FarmHands a community organization that has created a map of some of the farms in the Flathead area. She also serves on the AERO board and Flathead County Agency on Aging board.

Mary Ellen Halvorsen – retired Registered Dietician, does some consulting. A long time member of the Montana Dietetic Association she has worked to ameliorate the health of Montanans, alleviate food insecurity and champion various aspects of our Montana Food System. She is currently involved with Helena’s Growing Community Project which is establishing community gardens through the city.

Walt Hanley – Nutrition Manager Rocky Mountain Development Council. He is interested in assisting people to access affordable and healthy food and increasing participation in our food programs. He is a 32 year member of the Montana National Guard. Also volunteers with the Helena Food Bank and Meals on Wheels.

Alison Harmon – Assistant Professor of Food and Nutrition Montana State University. She serves as Faculty Advisor for MSU Towne’s Harvest Community Garden and MSU Friends of Local Food Student Organization. She is also the Americorp VISTA Site Supervisor for MSU’s Food Corps Volunteer. She is active in a number of professional and community organizations.

Coleen Kaiser – MSU Extension Nutrition Education Coordinator; Registered Dietician. She coordinates two low-income nutrition education programs across the state. She is interested in local, affordable foods and food security issues in Montana. She advocates the promotion of healthy lifestyles that include healthy food choices for all Montanans. She is a member of the American and Montana Dietetic Association.

Cheryl Kikkert – Coordinator of the Bitterroot Farmers Market Project and market liaison for the Montana EBT Farmers Market Project. Retired Coordinator of the Ravalli County WIC Program. The focus of her work has been on improving food security and nutritional status of families, seniors, veterans and people with disabilities by increasing access to local food through community gardens and farmers market projects.

Alicia Moe - Owner, marketer, distributor for Cream of the West a manufacturer of Montana-made food since 1914. She believes it is important to find efficient, effective, and creative ways to link Montana producers and consumers in order to sustain a healthy agricultural economy. The professional training she brings to the council is focused on helping groups of people collaborate, communicate and problem solve.

Cindy Owings – retired. She currently spends her time as a writer, organizer, and community food activist. She is a volunteer with the Bozeman Food Co-op and Red Feather Development Group. She writes a bi-weekly column for the Madisonian Newspaper focusing on local agriculture, sustainability, growing your own food and supporting small farmers.

Lisa Schmidt –Rancher (natural grass fed beef and lamb) and Writer. The mission of her ranch is to raise livestock in an environmentally and economically sustainable manner and to teach others about how and why we do it this way. She is active in numerous community organizations.

Bruce Smith – Extension Agent Montana State University and Farm-to-Table Project. Previous employment includes working for three of the eleven largest food manufacturing companies in the world. He believes we can use our statewide asset base to produce a majority of the food we eat in the state. By developing regional food systems we can keep that 10-13% of income the consumers spend on food within our local economies.

Eric Stenberg - Chef The Club at Spanish Peaks and Board Chairman Chefs Collaborative. The mission of the collaborative clearly states our desire to improve our local and national food system by supporting small family farms and education tomorrows chefs and producers on how we can make relationships work to sustain a future of good clean food.

Diana Taylor -Diana Taylor - Mayor of Big Timber. She has a strong interest in re-establishing a sustainable food system in Sweet Grass County and in Montana. She is an active participant in the Big Timber Farmers' Market, the Big Timber Community Garden, the Growing Center at Dornix Park, and Sweet Grass Foods

Jessica Wilcox – Food and Nutrition Services Manager Livingston Health Care. She has been using local foods at her facility since October 2007, probably the only hospital in the state to do so. She is a registered dietitian and passionate about securing local foods as it adds to the local economy, increases the quality, nutrition and freshness of food, decreases her carbon footprint, and she knows the source of her food.

THE MONTANA FOOD SYSTEM COUNCIL

1429 S. Grand Avenue, Bozeman MT 59715 (406) 570-5815

January 2009

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